

THIRD SERIES.

CURIOSITIES

OF

NATURAL HISTORY.

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LATE STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, AND ASSISTANT-SURGEON 2ND LIFE GUARDS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CURIOSITIES OF NATURAL HISTORY.

MY ADVENTURES AND JOURNEYS WITH PORPOISES

On Thursday morning, November 27, 1862, Mr. Bartlett was good enough to send me word to the 2nd Life Guards Barracks, Regent's Park, that he had just received a live porpoise.

I immediately went over to the Zoological Gardens and found the poor beast well cared for, and placed in a small tank of sea-water behind the aquarium-house.

On looking at our captive, I perceived that the porpoise was "very bad." He was upon his side—every now and then turning his under side uppermost. His breathing, or rather blowing, was hard and laboured, and his wonderfully-constructed blow-hole at the top of his head was working with difficulty. I counted his respirations, which were eight in the minute, loud and powerful (especially the expirations), reminding one of a man snoring heavily.

It was quite evident the porpoise was in a very exhausted state, and I could not help reasoning thus:—"This is an animal with a four-cavities heart; warm

blood, and air-breathing lungs; his system is much exhausted from a slow process of drowning *in air*; in fact, it is exactly in the same condition as a human being would be half drowned *in water*." . . .

Reasoning thus, I could not but help advising stimulants; and, having gained the permission of Mr. Bartlett, we agreed to give the porpoise a dose of ammonia immediately; but how to do it was the question. There was only one way; so I braved the cold water and jumped into the tank with the porpoise. I then held him up in my arms (he was very heavy), and, when I had got him in a favourable position, I poured a good dose of sal-volatile and water down his throat with a bottle.* (See Engraving.) . . .

This treatment had some salutary effect, for his respirations, which when I first saw him were eight in the minute, increased to ten, and then to twelve.

In two hours' time I visited him again, and again going into the water, lifted him up as well as I could while Mr. Bartlett poured down his throat a good glass of stiff brandy and water. Again the results were good; the respirations increased to thirteen a minute.

Perceiving that the water in which he was floating was stained with blood, I examined him all over, and found a wound in his tail which was bleeding pretty fast. This I soon stopped with common salt.

Seeing that, in spite of all done, the porpoise did not get much better, Mr. Bartlett and myself agreed to give him another chance; so we fished him out of his tank

* I used a bottle because I could get the stimulant well down into the pharynx (the back part of the throat), and the glass was strong enough not to break if he bit at it.

and deposited him therein with a sentry to keep watch and guard, and supply fresh water continually, till such time as he should arrive to take him away to London.

I at once saw that it was a very fine beast (not a fish, I recollect), and seemed in a pretty good state of health, or, as Hall, the man who caught him in his sprat net, said, "Look at him, sir, he is as nice a young fish as ever came out of the sea—only just watch his actions, sir, he is as cheerful as a kitten; I think he is *more* frolicsome since he has been in the tank than he was when I first caught him in my sprat net. Live out of water, sir? in course he will; I only wish I could live as long *under* the water as you fellow can live out of it in the air—wish you luck with him! The London folks don't often see such a beautiful beast as that, sir."

Looking pretty close at the water in the tank, I observed that even though it had been frequently changed it had a blood-red tinge about it; so I got the porpoise out on my arms, and saw at once that he had rubbed the bark of the tip of his lower jaw, and that it was bleeding away just like a man's chin bleeds when he has cut himself in shaving.

"This hæmorrhage will weaken the beast," thought I; "it *must* be stopped." So I ran off to a chemist's shop, and got a pennyworth of stick-caustic or nitrate of silver, and, lifting the porpoise's head gently out of the water, applied the caustic freely to the wound. The smarting of the caustic made the porpoise waggle his tail smartly, like a duck just come out of the water on to the edge of a pond; but the bleeding at once stopped then and there, and ~~this~~ was what I wanted.

Knowing that it was not advisable to take the porpoise

to London in a tank containing water, because the water splashes down the blow-hole and has a tendency to choke him. Mr. Earnshaw, at my request, kindly ordered his carpenter to knock up a rough box, which by the way, when finished, looked amazingly like a coffin, and we brought it down to the place where the porpoise was blowing away, like a steamboat ready to start. We then wetted some blankets with sea-water, obtained a huge can of sea-water and a big sponge, and we were all ready for the start.

A few minutes before the train left the station we hoisted, with the aid of a number of fishermen, the porpoise bodily out of the tank, put him on the blankets in his box, and trundled him off to a fish truck in the station. And here I must return my thanks to Mr Barnett, the station master at Folkestone, who gave me and Tennent, the keeper from the Zoological, who was sent me to assist in the operations, every facility to take care of our precious charge. Mr. Barnett provided us with a guard's van, and in we bundled Tennant, myself and the porpoise. I sat at the end of the box, close to the sea-water tank, so as to have good command of our sea pig; and lucky it was I did so, for soon after the train started the porpoise was "taken worse," and began to breathe very hard. I at once saw the cause, the delicate membranes composing his blow hole were getting dry, and would not close properly,* so I set to work with the sponge, and the whole way up to London kept on perpetually wiping and sponging the beast's nose and body with the wet sponge, so anxious was I that he should live.

* See Appendix, Anatomy of Porpoises.

The train went very fast, and in order that the porpoise should have all the air possible I opened all the windows and shutters I could get at, so that there was a perfect hurricane blowing through the van where we three—happy trio—were ensconced in the semi-darkness, having only my little hand-lamp, which I always carry when likely to have to travel by railway at night. This letting in the draught was evidently a good plan for every part of the journey, save and except the long tunnels.

When we got into these, the steam and smoke from the engine came in through the open windows, got down into the porpoise's blow hole, and made him snort and sneeze to such a degree, that I became positively alarmed for his life. His respirations increased from nine to fifteen in a minute, and I thought he was going to die then and there. Once out of the tunnel, he got better again, and the faster the train went the better the porpoise seemed to breathe. He had never travelled so fast before in his life, I'll be bound, and was doubtless much astonished at the rate in which he was being whisked through the air; though even this is doubtful, for he can swim at the bows of an ocean steamer going at express pace.

In about two hours and a-half we ran into the London-Bridge station, and right glad I was, for I was tired enough, sponging and watching the creature so incessantly. Mr. Bartlett had sent a light cart for us; we therefore whipped the porpoise, box and all, into the cart, and away we went through the London streets like a fire-engine going to a fire. When we got to Cumberland Market, Regent's Park, I was lighting my pipe, when I dropped, by accident, a vesuvian on

the porpoise's back; this made the porpoise jump up and roll round in his wooden cage like a "jack-in-the-box." "He's a-going, sir! he's a-going!" said the driver. "No, he is not a-going," said I; "you cut along with the cart, and attend to the horse, leave the porpoise to me; you have not got many yards to go now."

Arrived at the Zoological Gardens, we drove straight to the reservoir, where the water was deeper than the sturgeon's pond—besides which we did not want another poetical jobation in the columns of *Punch* and the *Times* from the royal fish for intruding on his privacy. The big reservoir would be a much better place, we thought, and so we drove the cart as near as we could to its edge. We then lifted out our porpoise—he was "very bad," and breathing much too fast to please me: we carried him up to the reservoir, Bartlett at his head and I at his tail, and let him slip slowly down, tail foremost, into the water. It was pitch dark, and I could hardly see what I was about. The mud was up to one's knees, and it was raining hard. I knew, however, by the splash that he was all right in the water. We then sat down and watched our friend by the help of the policeman's lantern, and in about half an hour he seemed so much better (though occasionally turning over and showing his white sides, an appearance which I did not much like), that we went away to bed quite tired out.

The next morning I was much pleased to hear that our porpoise was doing very well, and seemed better. Both Mr. Bartlett and I agreed that he was weak from want of food, but how to feed him was the difficulty. Mr.

Bartlett suggested a fish tied by string to a pole. I immediately caught the idea, sent for my jack trolling-rod, line, and spinning-tackle, and, taking a fresh herring, tied it by the tail to a fine bit of thin silk, and attached the other end of the silk to the spinning-tackle—of course without any hooks. I then judiciously spun the herring right in front of the porpoise's nose. To our great delight he took it in a moment, with a snap like a jack, and sailed away with it in his mouth. I gave him plenty of line (as in gorge-bait fishing for jack), and he ran it out famously. I then gave him some three or four minutes' law, and then jerked suddenly upon the line. Mr. Bartlett's plan acted admirably, and just as we wanted it to act, for the silk broke short off, and the herring remained in the porpoise's mouth. The porpoise then chumped and gnawed at the bait, but could not swallow it, he was too weak to get it down, and dropped it to the bottom of the pond. We then cut a smaller bit of herring; he attempted to gorge this also, but, as with the larger fish, he could not swallow, and dropped this also, even this little bit. We then tried with a small live carp, which we tied with thin silk on by the tail in the same way as the herring. Strange to say, he would not attempt to bite at this, as though he knew it was not a salt-water fish, but a fresh-water fish, and "no good" to him.

Mr. Bartlett then tried with the spinning-rod line, a small whiting being the bait. The porpoise took seven or eight baits from us in this way, but not one would he swallow down; he dropped them all after munching them a bit. Upon consultation, therefore.

we determined, that as the beast was too weak to swallow of its own accord, that we would help him; so I got down by a ladder into the reservoir, and, catching the porpoise by the fin as he passed, watched my opportunity and pushed a herring with my hand right down into his stomach; he scored my hand with his teeth, but I did not care about that. For a minute or two after I had given him the herring he seemed better, but he very soon began to show that his supper did not agree with him, for he began to flutter his tail and dance about at the top of the water.

—After sundry efforts, he made a spring, spat up the herring, and then—ungrateful wretch! after all the trouble and labour I had bestowed upon him turned up his fins and died right off. The cause of his death was, I believe, the herring sticking in his throat as he ejected it from his stomach, and so suffocating him. If he had left it in his stomach where I put it, I don't think he would have died. o

Dr. Sclater, Mr. Bartlett, and myself, were all, of course, very sorry that this porpoise should so suddenly have taken leave of us in this offhand manner. Nevertheless, we intend to persevere, and have a live porpoise one of these days at the Gardens. We have now gained many minor experiences, and the proper food of these curious water mammalia, and we intend to persevere till we succeed, for we now know perfectly how the transport is to be managed.

Should this meet the eye of any gentleman who can obtain a live and *uninjured* (mind his eyes have not been put out) porpoise for us, at any reasonable distance from town, we should feel most obliged if he would at

once buy him, place him immediately in a large salt-water tank, or even a fresh-water pond or reservoir of clean water (if there be one handy), and telegraph at once to Dr. Sclater, Secretary to the Society, Mr. Bartlett, or myself, and a messenger would come down at once to fetch him up to the Gardens, where, if we should succeed, he would doubtless become a great source of amusement and instruction to the public.

I make this request, *he it remarked*, as one of the Fellows of the Society, and *not with any wish in any way whatever to interfere with the operations of the Council*, for I hold no office in the Society.

The events described above in the transport of this porpoise to London were, shortly after the above lines appeared in the columns of the "*Times*" and "*The Field*," put, unknown to myself, into verse by a friend, under the *nom de plume* of Wadding; and one Saturday morning I was much astonished and amused to find in the columns of "*The Field*" the following distich, which I trust will amuse the reader as much as it did myself:—

FRANK BUCKLAND'S PORPOISE.

Air—"The King of the Cannibal Islands."

Oh! have you heard the news of late,
About a mighty fish so great?
If you've not 'tis in my pate—

Why Buckland's got a Porpoise!
The telegraph a message bore
From Messrs. Minter and Earnshaw,
Which duly reached Frank Buckland's door
From Folkestone—"We've a fish on shore!"

So off on Monday morning set
 Frank Buckland and Signor Bartlett,
 That they, if possible, might get
 Alive—Frank Buckland's Porpoise.
 Fishery, fleshery, fowelry, jig,
 Rum-tum-toodlum, little or big,
 For whether a moa, a porpoise, or pig,
 'Tis all the same to Buckland.

Arrived at Folkestone, in a tank
 They found Sir Porpoise, lean and lank,
 But still alive—how glad was Frank!
 To see his darling Porpoise.
 To get him home, "that was the rub,"
 So they had made a kind of tub
 Stuffed full of blankets—but no grub,
 Nor any kind of drink was sub-
 Stituted for the lack of sea,
 From which unkindly they took he,
 That Londoners might come and see
 Frank Buckland's darling Porpoise.
 Fishery, fleshery, &c.

Ensconced within the railway van
 Sat Tennant, the Society's man,
 With marine water in a can,
 And sponge for Buckland's Porpoise.
 Frank Buckland too was there, "in course,"
 His kind attentions to disburse;
 'Twas lucky the fish had such a nurse,
 For he, ere long, was "taken worse."

The cause soon caught Frank Buckland’s eye,
 And he the sponge began to ply,
 For the porpoise he was “werry dry”
 About his nose and corpus.
 Fishery, fleshery, &c.

Arrived in town, through streets they start;
 Friend Bartlett he had sent a cart
 In order to perform his part
 To carry away the Porpoise.
 Said Frank, “This journey is no joke,
 I’m tired, so I’ll have a smoke;”
 But in his haste the fusee broke
 (Enough a parson to provoke);
 It hissing, sparkling, fell, alack!
 Ere he could save it, in a crack,
 And, sad to say, it burnt the back
 Of his own darling Porpoise.
 Fishery, fleshery, &c.

No joys are e’er without their woes—
 With fish, as with us, I suppose—
 So thinks Frank Buckland as he goes,
 For the porpoise was a raving.
 Ye gods! what can the matter be?
 The water’s tinged with blood, d’ye see!
 This funny fish has had a spree,
 And’s trying now to humbug me!
 Thus thought Frank—before they start,
 What remedy can I impart?
 When, said the man who drove the cart,
 “He’s out hisself a shavin’.”
 Fishery, fleshery, &c.

The Garden's gate they quickly gain,
 Wet through, with the monster of the main ;
 But whether there's snow, or hail, or rain,
 Frank doesn't care two "gardens."
 They place him in the reservoir,
 And gave him herrings, three or four,
 But he couldn't swallow—his throat was sore,
 Frank Buckland mourns—his pet's no more !
 So fishermen all, I hope you'll strive
 Another porpoise to "catch alive,"
 That Buckland may at last contrive
 To have one in the Gardens.

WADDING.

(See Appendix. Further information about porpoises ;
 for hints as to the catching a porpoise with hook and
 line, &c., will be found in the Appendix.)

EXHIBITIONS.

M. J. BRICE, THE FRENCH GIANT.

"I AM the agent and interpreter of a French subject; he is a giant; his height is 8 feet; his weight 30 stone; his age 22; of a pleasing exterior. I take the liberty to offer him to your lordships' notice, &c. &c." —

The above paragraph caught my eye among the advertisements of "The Times," in May, 1862—just at the time the Great Exhibition was about to be opened.

It appears that the giant had offered his services in costume on this memorable occasion, but they were refused.

Thinking it likely that the giant would not leave London without exhibiting himself, I made inquiries as to his whereabouts, and at last discovered him.

On my first introduction to M. Joseph Brice (for that is his name), I confess I felt, literally, "very small;" but, after a few minutes' conversation, recovered from my feelings of "smallness," and at once perceived that my friend was not only a giant, but also *un bon gargon*.

Giants, for the most part, exhibit enormous proportions of limbs at the expense of the mental powers. M. Brice is an exception to this rule; he carried with him an agreeable air of *politesse*; he is courteous and affable to strangers; and his manners are so agreeable, that his visitors feel at ease in his presence, and not *gauché* and uncomfortable, as English people are too apt to feel when they try to do the civil to Frenchmen. He is fond of conversation, and there is a sly vein of humour in his remarks; he is the "Good-natured Giant," and not the fierce Fe-Fo-Fum ogre of the nursery tales.

When I first made acquaintance with the giant, he was dressed in the uniform of the Tambour-Major (drum major) of the French Imperial Guard. In this costume he looked really magnificent. His age was 22 years; and the handbills stated that his height was 8 feet. It really was about 7 feet 6½ inches, from that to 7 feet 7 inches. Anyhow, a doorway 7 feet 6½ inches would not let him through without his stooping considerably. I would beg the reader just to mark out 7 feet 8 inches on the wall of his room, and compare his own stature by the mark, and he will see to what an enormous stature M. Brice had attained.

The following is the personal history of the giant:—His name is Joseph Brice. He was born at the village of Ramonchamp, in the Vosges, a chain of mountains bounding the valley of the Rhine on the west, from the neighbourhood of Muhlhausen, to that of Mayence; the chain is partly in France, partly in the Rhenish province of Bavaria.

M. Brice was born in that part of the range which

belongs to France, and hence he sometimes calls himself "The Giant of the Mountains." He speaks French perfectly, without the least trace of a *patois*.

His parents were hard-working, respectable farm-people: they were by no means gigantic themselves, but about the ordinary size of French peasants.

At his birth there was nothing to indicate that he was about to grow to his present stature, and up to the age of six years, his height did not exceed that of most children of his age. After a short illness, he began to assume such gigantic proportions that his parents were much alarmed about him, but still he continued to grow and enjoy perfect health.

At the age of thirteen he was equal to the height of his father and the generality of the neighbouring farmers.

The phenomenon of his being as tall as a man and yet showing all the habits and actions of a child, caused him to be the talk of the neighbourhood, and to suffer at the same time great personal discomfort; for the children would not play with him, the men could not associate with him.

At the age of sixteen he commenced to exhibit himself in public, and visited the principal towns in France, and at Paris, where he was well received, not only by the Emperor himself, but by the public in general.

I paid the giant several visits: somehow or another, we took a fancy to each other, and I did my best to do what little services I could, as he was quite a stranger in England, and had not a single friend in London, and this he evidently felt much. I therefore determined to do my best to be a real friend to the poor

giant—good-natured, excellent, gentlemanlike fellow as he was!

We ultimately became great friends, and I invited him up to the Regent's Park Barracks, where I introduced him to my brother-Officers. It was great fun to see our great, tall Life-Guard Troopers stand by his side, or walk under his arm, and look *up* to him.

A very curious thing took place. At one of his visits I took him into the stables to see the troop-horses, and as he passed through the stable, the horses shied and snorted at him. They were pretty well accustomed to tall men, but yet they actually shied at the giant! So he must have been something extraordinary.

After I had known him some time, I persuaded the giant to allow me to take his measurements (N.B., I was obliged to get on a chair to do it). They were as follows:—

	Inches.
Actual height	90
Circumference of head	25
Round the chest	54
Across the shoulders	25
Length of arm (humerus)	19
Length of forearm (radius)	25½
Circumference of forearm	14
Length of middle finger	5½
Diameter of hand	6
Length of thigh-bone (femur)	27½
Length of leg-bone (tibia)	22½
Length of foot	15½
Diameter of foot	8
Stretch of arms	95½

At my request, he was good enough to extend his arm at full length against the wall, and I found his full stretch to be no less than $95\frac{1}{2}$ inches; in fact, he very nearly answers to the dimensions that every well-made man ought to show on measurement. And I have this on the authority of an eminent sculptor. The rule is, this: If a measure be taken from the exact centre of the body, and the person stands spread-eagle fashion, the measure ought to describe a circle, the circumference being marked by the end of the outstretched hand and arm, and of the leg and foot—these limbs forming the radii of a circle.

• Casts of the giant's hand were taken at my suggestion, and I have two casts now in my possession. He also presented me with a pair of his shoes, which are, indeed, regular canoes; they measure 1 foot 4 inches in length, and $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches across.

After a while, the giant left London for a tour in the provinces. By a most extraordinary coincidence, almost wherever I went to lecture, I found my friend the giant also in the town, and this without either of us having the least idea of meeting. Thus, when I went to Sheffield, there was the giant; at Liverpool, Nottingham, and at Worcester, always the same thing; the giant was always pleased to see me as much as I was to see him. In the course of his travels in Ireland, the giant had fallen in love; and at Worcester he introduced me to Mrs. Brice—a very agreeable, good-looking, chatty girl—who has made the giant an excellent wife, and takes the greatest care of him.

In October, 1865, M. Brice and his wife returned to London, Mr. Anderson having engaged his services at

St. James's Hall, where he is at this time, December, 1865, appearing as "Anak, King of the Anakims; or, The Giant of Giants." Just before his arrival, Chang, the Chinese giant, had been holding his levées at the Egyptian Hall, and Brice came up as a sort of rival. Brice is much the finest man of the two, in every way, — at least, to my taste.

On his arrival in London, I gave a dinner-party in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Brice, and a very pleasant evening we spent. The giant, I observed, had certainly grown somewhat. We made out his height to be (soldier measurement) about 7 feet 8 inches, and he was well and hearty—thanks to Mrs. Brice's care of him.

When the party broke up, I sent for a cab. It was very amusing to see the cabman's face of semi-horror and astonishment when his fare came out into the streets in the dim gaslight; he seemed half inclined to jump on his box and bolt away as fast as his horse could go. The giant, however, put his elbow on the top of the cab, and told the man where to go. This pacified him a little; for the poor fellow, I believe, fancied we were playing some trick upon him.

After dinner, the giant showed us how far he could stretch his arm: the tops of his fingers touched the cornice of the room, just 9 feet 8 inches from the ground; in fact, he could "catch flies off the ceiling" if he stood on tiptoe.

I asked the giant if, in his travels in England, Ireland, or Scotland, he had met with any man taller, or nearly as tall, as himself. He told me the tallest men he had met with were as follows:—

1st. A gentleman (he believed of the legal profession)

who came to see him at Haverfordwest, who measured 6 feet 8½ inches.

2nd. A man in the police force at Newcastle, who measured 6 feet 9½ inches.

3rd. John Greeve, of Pontefract, Yorkshire, who measured 6 feet 10½ inches.

The giant informed me that the greatest number of tall men he observed in his tour throughout the United Kingdom, were in Yorkshire and Lancashire; and this corresponds very much to my experience as medical officer of the 2nd Life Guards. The geological condition of the soil, I found in my experience in examining recruits for the regiment, has considerable effect upon the stature of the inhabitants;—*coal-producing* countries, as a rule, generally grow the tallest, and, at the same time, the largest-boned men.*

P.S.—I have observed the last few weeks flaming handbills, about London in which my name is printed in huge red letters as the authority for the measurements of the giant; other than I have given above. I beg to inform the public that these bills were distributed without my knowledge or permission, and I am in no way responsible for the statements made. The giant himself had nothing to do with these bills. November 20, 1865.

* I propose writing my notes on this subject some day in a distinct chapter.

GIANTS IN GENERAL.

THE last giant I had the pleasure of visiting, and also privately entertaining, was a Spanish giant, whom many of my readers must recollect as being exhibited at the Cosmorama Rooms, in Regent-street. His name was Senor Joachim Eleizegue. He came from the Basque provinces of Spain, and his height was *said to be* 7 feet 10 inches. I regret much I did not take accurate measurements at the time, as I frequently saw him in private. I can well recollect he was not nearly such a fine or such a "nice" giant as M. Brice. His cousin happened to be a patient at St. George's Hospital at the time I was student there, and the giant was in the habit of paying frequent visits to his invalided cousin, and much the other patients were astonished when he came stalking into the wards.

Among modern giants I must now mention the following: In the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's-inn-fields, is the skeleton of a giant who in his day excited great wonder and curiosity; his name was O'Brian, or Byrne; he was commonly known by the

title of the Irish giant.* This man was said to have been 8 feet high. I have measured his skeleton carefully for my present purpose, and find it to be 92½ inches, as near as possible.

His history, as quoted by the College catalogue from the Annual Register's Chronicle, June 1783, vol. xxxv., p. 209, is as follows: "In Cockspur-street, Charing-cross, died Mr. Charles Byrne, the famous Irish giant, whose death was said to have been precipitated by excessive drinking, but more particularly by the late loss of almost all his property, which he had simply invested in a single Bank of England note for 700l."

I hear he hid his note in the fireplace in summer-time, and somebody lighted the fire and burnt the poor giant's hard earnings. I think it was old Mr. Cliff who told me.

Our present readers may not be displeased to know, on the evidence of an ingenious correspondent, who had an opportunity of informing himself, that Mr. Byrne, in August, 1780, measured 8 feet; in 1782 he had gained two inches. Neither father, mother, brother, or other person of his family was of an extraordinary size.

The limbs in O'Brian's skeleton are well-proportioned, but he must have been "in-kneed," and the arms are relatively shorter than the legs.

We have at the College a portrait of O'Brian, and it appears that his visitors made the same personal comparisons with the giant in 1783 as the visitors of the present day do when they give M. Brice a call; for I

* Mr. Cliff told me how this skeleton was procured, but the story might not please some of my readers. A pair of O'Brian's stockings are, I believe, in the Museum at Bristol.

saw an old drawing of O'Brian's *soigée*, a little doctor (my. antitype, I suppose) perched high on a chair measuring his chest. A soldier (of the period) was standing on tiptoe under his arm, and a good-looking young lady was showing her pretty "tiny silken-sandl'd" foot by the side of the giant's, the comparison being greatly in favour of the lady's foot, as far as beauty went.

Besides the above there are at the College casts of the hands of Patrick Cotter, the Irish giant, whose height was 8 feet 7½ inches; also of Mr. Louis Frenz, whose height was 7 feet 4 inches; also casts of the hands of a Lapland giant, and of an English giant, named Bradley, to the latter of whom Mr. Bushby thus in "The Field" reverts:—

In Mr. Buckland's article on "Giants," in "The Field" of Saturday, he spoke of a cast of a hand of Bradley. William Bradley, the Yorkshire Giant, was born at Market Weighton, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, in the year 1798 (and I have an engraving of him, published in London, May 8th, 1811, by Messrs. Bradley and Gibson); at nineteen years of age he stood 7 ft. 8 in., and weighed 27 stone (of 14 lbs. to the stone). He died in, or about, the year 1820. He has, or had, last September (I saw him), living at Market Weighton, a brother, Robert Bradley; and there are several old people in Market Weighton, who knew him well. I never saw him myself.

I am, &c.

Darfield, Barnsley, Yorkshire.

JOHN BUSHBY.

About the time that M. Brice was in London the Irish giant, Murphy, died of small-pox at Marseilles. He was twenty-six years of age, about twenty-four stone in weight, and (it is said) was within a few inches of 9 feet high. He was a native of Killowen, near Ros-trevor. He began life as a labourer at the Liverpool

docks, but soon obtained a situation as a waiter at an hotel, where his size, and agreeable manners helped to bring custom to the house. He then took to exhibiting himself regularly, and made a little fortune.

Of other giants I have the following records. The heights given of some of these men I think must be excessive.

On a tombstone in the churchyard of Calverley, in Yorkshire, is an inscription to the memory of "Benjamin, son of John Cromach, who died 25th September, 1826, aged twenty-five years," who took a coffin 7 feet 11 inches long. Again, in 1572, Del Rio saw a Piedmontese more than 9 feet in stature. Julius Scaliger describes a giant he saw at Milan lying upon two beds placed end to end. Gasper Bauhin cites a Swiss of 8 feet. A Swede, one of the body-guard of the King of Prussia, was $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet; and Vanderbrook saw a black man, a Congo, 9 feet high. Berkeley, the celebrated Bishop of Cloyne, was of opinion that he could raise up by artificial means a rival to Og and Goliath. He tried the experiment on a lad named Macgrath. The lad waxed taller and taller, and at length was carried all over Europe as a show. Just, however, as he had reached the age of twenty, and the stature of 7 feet 8 inches, according to the "London Chronicle" of 1760, page 506, the poor giant died.

In the year 1684 was exhibited in public, at Oxford, Edmund Melloon (born at Port Leicester, in Ireland); he was nineteen years of age, and was 7 feet 6 inches high; not so big as M. Brice; his finger was $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches long; span 14 inches, cubic 2 feet 2 inches.

In the year 1682 was exhibited, at Dublin, another

giant. His father was in no way remarkable for his height, and his mother was of a more than ordinary low stature. When he stood on the bare ground, with his shoes off, he measured full 7 feet 7 inches.

At Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, in Baker-street, there is a wax model of Loushkin, the Russian giant, "the tallest man that has ever lived in modern days," measuring 8 feet 5 inches high, dressed in his military costume as drum-major of the Imperial Regiment of Guards, Preobrajensky." In the "Chamber of Horrors" is a cast of the thigh-bone of this giant, and also a model of his hand; &c.

I omitted to mention, that at the College of Surgeons, close to O'Brian's skeleton; stands that of a man who, not many years ago, served at the bar of the Lion and Ball, in Red Lion-street, London. He was called "the American giant." The height of the skeleton, by measurement, is 6 feet 9 inches.

When my late lamented friend, Dr. Gentzik, of Vienna, was in England, I showed him the cast of M. Brice's hand, in my possession. He informed me that there were some gigantic human bones in the Museum at Vienna, &c. I immediately wrote to Professor Jos. Hyrtl, who very kindly sent me the following information:—

"SIR,

"I hasten to send you the measurements of the giant bones belonging to the anatomical museum under my care, together with some information I could pick up about the individual who was the bearer of them.

"In the latter half of the 18th century the burying-

place surrounding St. Stephen's Cathedral was cleared out by order of the Emperor Joseph II. An immense quantity of bones were conveyed to the churchyards of the suburbs. A medical officer was ordered to inspect them, and to collect pathological specimens. A cart-load of such was brought to the University, where they were put up in the anatomical museum. The most interesting among them are the giant bones in question: *Os innominatum*, femur and tibia. Comparing the length of these bones with that of the same in an individual of known length, it is but an easy reckoning that our giant was a very young man, somewhat above 8 feet 6 inches in height. No other known giants attained such an enormous development, viz., the great Tonas, in the Museum of Berlin, a similar skeleton in the Museum of Marburg, and the famous O'Brian in the Hunterian collection.

"My Professor of Anatomy, thirty years ago, Dr. Mayer, told me repeatedly he had heard from his grandfather, that in the time of the latter there was in Vienna a story, very common, of the big *Hayduk*, in the service of Count Hunyady. This *Hayduk* (an inferior kind of body-guard of Hungarian magnates) was originally a Turk in the army which besieged Vienna in the year 1683. During a valiant sally of the armed citizens he was badly wounded and made prisoner. The fathers of the Franciscan convent in the town took care of him, and succeeded in converting the poor fellow to Christianity. The above count, who probably was also a curiosity-hunter, fond of giants, enlisted the re-convalescent convert as his *Hayduk*, and let him officiate as porter to his palace in Vienna. The house bore for a long time

the nickname, 'To the big Hayduk,' and when there was wanted a comparison with somewhat very great, the 'big Hayduk' found his way to the mouth of every man in Vienna. So far goes Professor Mayer, who took it for granted that the astonishing remnants of the giant skeleton are those of the 'big Hayduk.' *Relata refero.*

"Your very obedient servant,

"JOS. HYRTL.

"Vienna, Sept. 30th, 1862."

With reference to the discovery of gigantic human skeletons, Mr. Bartlett tells me the following curious and interesting story:—

An Irish labourer once told him that he had discovered the skeleton of a giant in an Irish bog; he described it as placed *on its back*; the back-bone, the legs and arms were, he stated, quite perfect, and also that, in his opinion, these bones must have been the remains of a person not less than 17 feet high.

Mr. Bartlett, of course, rather laughed at the story, but, being a wise man, determined to go deeper into the matter, and cross-examined the Irish labourer very closely; the man was positive about the story, so positive indeed that it was quite evident he was telling no lies. Mr. Bartlett at last ascertained that this skeleton was that of an ancient Irish elk (*Cervus megaceros*): the head was missing, but the bones happening to be placed flat on the ground in the manner that a human skeleton would naturally assume, they resembled so much (to the uneducated eye) the bones of a gigantic specimen of the human subject, that the mistake is almost pardonable.

This is a good lesson, always to inquire into stories, however improbable they may appear at first sight.

I cannot help placing with the above a most remarkable instance of a discovery of human bones, which might if found by any one but a scientific observer be written as giant's bones. Professor James D. Forbes thus writes :—
"We found (among the precipices of Mont Colton) the remains of the bones and skins of two chamois, and near them the complete bones of a man. The latter were arranged in a very singular manner, nearly the whole skeleton being there in detached bones, laid in order along the ice ; the skull lowest, next the arms and ribs, and finally the bones of the pelvis, legs and feet disposed along the glacier, so that the distance between the head and feet might be five yards ; a disposition certainly arising from some natural cause not very easy to assign."

The disposition of these bones must of course be dependent upon the movement of the ice blocks forming the glacier upon which the bones were placed : if Professor Forbes cannot explain it, it would be presumptuous in me to make the attempt.

Though authentic accounts of giants in the flesh are not very common, we find instances innumerable on record of the bones and skeletons of giants having been found buried in the earth. Some labourers who were digging gravel in front of St. John's College, Oxford, discovered and trundled off to my father a wheelbarrow full of "giants' bones," which he immediately decided to be the bones of fossil elephants. The men were persuaded into this belief, but they began to account for the presence of the elephant, coming to the conclusion